

REMARKS

In response to the restriction requirement, Applicants affirm the election of Group I, claims 1-27.

Claims 1-5 and 19-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,643,603 to Bottenberg et al (hereinafter "Bottenberg"). Claims 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Bottenberg. This patent discloses a composition containing precooked starch and polyacrylic acid. However, in contrast to the amended claims, Bottenberg neither teaches nor suggests an aqueous dispersion containing suspended materials and a starch composition which functions as a clarifying aid in the aqueous dispersion. The composition of Bottenberg is used as a bioadhesive carrier for drugs, not as a clarifying aid in an aqueous dispersion. These are completely unrelated technical fields. Moreover, the mechanisms by which the compositions function in the two technical fields are different. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are novel and nonobvious in view of Bottenberg.

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,512,618 to Duerr (hereinafter "Duerr"). Claims 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Duerr. This patent discloses a composition made by cooking a starch, and mixing the cooked starch with a copolymer based on an acrylic acid monomer. However, in contrast to the amended claims, Duerr neither teaches nor suggests an aqueous dispersion containing suspended materials and a starch composition which functions as a clarifying aid in the aqueous dispersion. The composition of Duerr is used as an adhesive to make corrugated paperboard, not as a clarifying aid in an aqueous dispersion. These are completely unrelated technical fields. Moreover, the mechanisms by which the compositions function in the two technical fields are different. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are novel and nonobvious in view of Duerr.

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,424,291 to Leake et al (hereinafter "Leake"). Claims 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Leake. This patent discloses a composition made from a gelatinized (cooked) starch mixed with a polymer containing carboxyl groups derived from an ethylenically unsaturated polycarboxylic acid. However, in contrast to the amended claims, Leake neither teaches nor suggests an aqueous dispersion containing suspended materials and a starch composition which functions as a clarifying aid in the aqueous dispersion. The composition of Leake is used as an adhesive to make corrugated paperboard, not as a clarifying aid in an aqueous dispersion. These are completely unrelated technical fields. Moreover, the mechanisms by which the compositions function in the two technical fields are different. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are novel and nonobvious in view of Leake.

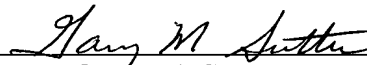
Claims 1-5, 7-9, 19-23 and 25-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5,061,346 to Taggart et al (hereinafter "Taggart"). Claims 6, 10-18 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Taggart. This patent discloses adding a starch to a paper furnish, and then separately adding carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC) to the paper furnish following the addition of the starch. The starch and CMC adsorb on the cellulosic fibers of the paper to increase the inter-fiber bond strength of the paper. In contrast to the amended claims, Taggart neither teaches nor suggests a starch composition which functions as a clarifying aid in an aqueous dispersion. The starch and CMC of Taggart are used to increase the strength of the paper, not to function as a clarifying aid in the paper furnish. Further in contrast to the amended claims, Taggart neither teaches nor suggests the starch and the polymer being combined before adding the starch composition to the aqueous dispersion. Taggart states that it is critical that the CMC be added separately and following the addition of the starch. As shown in the examples of the present patent application, Applicants have found that the separate addition of the starch and the polymer is not effective for

clarifying a paper furnish. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are novel and nonobvious in view of Taggart.

Newly cited WO 03/042295 A1 discloses cooking the starch, mixing it with a polyacrylamide, and then re-cooking the mixture (page 4, lines 17-19). In contrast, amended claim 1 recites cooking the starch for a time effective to gelatinize the starch before mixing the starch with the polymer. The cooked starch and the polymer are not re-cooked after mixing them together.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been reviewed by Applicants but it is not considered to be any more relevant than the art of record.

Respectfully submitted,



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